

City of Bloomington Commission on the Status of Black Males Minutes of May 11, 2005

Members present: Larry Brown, David Hummons, Cedric Harris, Jim Sims, Genny Williamson, Paulette Dilworth and William Knox. **Staff Present:** Craig Brenner, Liaison, City of Bloomington Community and Family Resources Department. **Guests Present:** Daniel Grundmann and Susannah Karls, City of Bloomington Employee Services Department; Sophia Travis, Monroe County Council; Liz Grenat, Executive Director, Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Monroe County, and Aniko Bahr, MCCSC Office of Multicultural Education and Services.

2. Request for Additional Agenda Items

Request to move Agenda item 9 (City of Bloomington Employee Services Department) to the beginning of the meeting.

3. **Approval of Minutes:** April 12, 2005 minutes were approved.

4. City of Bloomington Employee Services Department

Daniel Grundmann: Daniel attended a Commission meeting last spring to talk about minority recruitment and hiring. The biggest issue is the size of the applicant pool. They are seeking suggestions on how to expand and diversify the applicant pool.

Susannah Karls: Budget constraints. Focusing on relationship building by going to job fairs, culture centers and individual networking. They seek to widen their Spanish speaking resources. They have been to MCCSC and are looking at Indiana Black Expo but it is expensive to post all of their positions; for example, to post 50 positions would cost about \$4,000.00. **Daniel:** on average, approximately 60% of applicants complete Affirmative Action forms. Employee Services offer classes on diversity, managing diversity and EEO/Affirmative Action but supervisors are not currently required to attend classes. One challenge is that for any given position, there may be only white males who complete the Affirmative Action forms. As for union jobs, contractually they must consider internal candidates first – e.g., every attempt is made to hire/promote from within. **Genny:** Consider an internship or apprenticeship with students from IU or even area high schools. **David:** Be specific on developing a target group of potential applicants. **Jim:** The City is making efforts, i.e. the Mayor's Office has a number of internships.

5. Follow Up Issues from Town Hall Meeting on Race, School Discipline, and Criminal Justice

A. MCCSC Human Understanding and Diversity Forum

Larry: We are not getting the parent participation that we expected.

Representation is high from school board and administration. **Aniko:** State of Indiana requires publication of suspension/expulsion data. **Jim:** Are some kids being home-schooled due to dissatisfaction with MCCSC? Are the kids dropouts?

David: How do we encourage parents of at-risk kids to attend the forums? **Liz:** Move the forum to their neighborhood. **Aniko:** Reason why forums are held at the MCCSC offices is to show the public that they are invited

(welcomed) to MCCSC. **Genny:** If you're a family in crisis, would you want to go to a forum addressing statistics? If you have no kid in crisis, would you go to the

forum? **Paulette:** Silence can send a message. Suggestion to do some targeted parent focus groups. **Sophia:** People at the last round table forum wanted to have an open, frank discussion. Building consensus can undermine the seriousness of the statistics. **Paulette/Aniko:** Some of these kids don't want to say some things in front of administrators. **Larry:** Problem is with 6:00 pm starting time -- many parents are at basketball court watching their kids. **Paulette:** Then we need to be at the basketball court. **Jim:** We are at a point where mediation might be used in MCCSC. **David:** We should stay with the forums for a while. **Craig:** Have the forum meet in the community. **David:** Hear parents in a less intimidating environment.

There is a work session on May 17th at 5:30 pm in Room 204, MCCSC Administration Building.

B. Criminal Justice Task Force Recommendations

Jim: It will be better received if we emphasize one of the seven recommendations: focus on cameras in police vehicles. It was suggested to send a letter to the Mayor.

6. Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Coalition Report

Jim: completed a form to apply for funding to provide services to Black males.

7. State Commission

We do not know the current status of the Indiana Commission. Steve Ingram is the Executive Director.

8. Big Brothers Big Sisters

Liz Grenat: 30 years in Bloomington. 450 children served individually and 200 in groups.

BOYS: wait for Big Brother down to 18 months from 3 years. Need to find male volunteers and minority volunteers – primarily African American. 8-15% of kids are African American or Biracial and only 1-2% of volunteers are African American. Many kids are raised by grandparents (mother) and they initially prefer an African American volunteer and then later on they'll take any volunteer. A challenge: many volunteers are IU students who are here for a short time and many of them do not have cars.

GIRLS: Mothers will question why their daughters need Big Sisters when the mothers are at home. Liz is looking for suggestions to get more African American and Latino / Spanish-speaking volunteers.

9. Goals for 2005 Based Upon Fall Planning Retreat

Genny will give us a summary.

10. Possible Recognition of Black Males in the Schools

See the handout Genny passed out. **Larry:** NAACP gives out two scholarships.

Aniko: The forum with Black males in high school has not happened in 2 years – reminder.

Next Meeting: June 13, 2005, 4:00 – 5:30 p.m., City Hall at Showers Plaza.